

habits, physically, that a boy can form. It injures the heart and the digestion, and it tends to check the growth.

Why the Sermon was Dull

Morning Gulde.

"The dullest sermon I ever listened to!" exclaimed Sam, petulantly, as he came home from church.

"Yes," replied grandfather, a twinkle in his eye. "I thought so myself."

"Did you, grandfather?" exclaimed Sam, glad to have some one stand by him.

"I mean to say I thought you thought so," replied his grandfather. "I enjoyed it because my appetite was whetted for it before I went to church. While the minister was preaching I noticed it was just the other way with you."

"How?" Sam demanded.

"Why, before you went," answered grandfather, "instead of sharpening your appetite for the sermon, you dulled it by reading a trashy paper. Then instead of sitting straight up and looking at the minister while he preached, as tho you wanted to catch every word he said and every expression of his face, you lounged down in your seat and turned half-way around. I never knew anybody who could hear a sermon right from the side of his head. Then you let your eyes rove about the church and out of the window. That dulled the sense. You dulled your ears by listening to a dog that was barking, and the milk-man's bell, and the train puffing into the station. You dulled your mind and soul by thinking you were a terribly abused boy for having to go to church and stay thro the sermon, and so you made yourself a dull listener. And I never knew it to fail in my life that a dull listener made a dull sermon."

TALKS TO BOYS

W. T. Ellis.

Every boy needs a friend, one who is strong and wise and loving. It is the thoughtful opinion of millions who have put him to the test that there is no friend so true and tender as the Man Christ Jesus, who has promised to be with us "all the days." Although Jesus may not seem very real and personal to you now, I assure you that there will come a time, probably before you reach manhood, when his friendship will be more practical and helpful than any human being's could possibly be. You will find yourself in circumstances where all other help will fail you, and you will need the strong, loving friendship of Jesus.

But even as a boy you need Jesus. He will make your fun healthier and purer; he will make your work more earnest and faithful; he will be your helper in your studies and in all your affairs. Only his aid can keep you true and brave when temptations come. Without him your ideals will sink lower and lower with every passing year, until you become that greatest of failures—a failure in character.

Does this seem like a "preachy" talk, boys? I do not know why it is that when

we begin to speak of the most practical things in the universe—far more practical than bread and butter, or dollars and cents—we should be accused of preaching. Personally, I know the reality of religion in a boy's life. When I was a boy of twelve I made public profession of the Saviour, and there has been nothing in all my life that has been more practical, or that has given me more satisfaction and joy, than the presence of Jesus in my life. Now I am hoping that these words will set many of you to thinking about accepting the Saviour at once. You will find him a good Master.

Doubtless there never was a genuine boy who did not have some one man for his ideal. Probably the boys who are reading these lines have in their minds just now some particular men whom they would like to resemble. Possibly your standard is a man in your own neighborhood, your pastor or teacher, or your own father. More likely it is a great person about whom you have read—perhaps your own immortal Lincoln. I have not a word to say against this. I believe in it; it is good. But it is not good enough.

Yes, that is the truth. Your ambition is noble and commendable, but it is not noble enough. If your pastor or teacher or father, or Lincoln himself, were perfect men, or even the best that you know, then nothing more could be asked of you. But they are not. There is One—and I am speaking very practically, boys—who is a better Standard than any other; who, in truth, is the only perfect Standard. It is not worth while to pattern after any other person since Jesus Christ has lived the sort of life that we, too, should live.

The Christian Life

A Prayer

Our Father, hear our longing prayer,
And help this prayer to flow,
That humble thoughts, which are Thy care,
May live in us and grow.

For lowly hearts shall understand
The peace, the calm delight,
Of dwelling in Thy heavenly land,
A pleasure in Thy sight.

Give us humility, that so
Thy reign may come within,
And when Thy children homeward go,
We too may enter in.

Hear us, our Saviour! ours Thou art,
Though we are not like Thee;
Give us Thy Spirit in a heart
Large, lowly, trusting, free.

—George MacDonald.

PRAYER MEETING TOPICS

THE PROPHETS—JEREMIAH. NO. 3

IV. Passages worth quoting

1. "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water."—Jer. 2:13.

2. "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee."—Jer. 2:19, whole verse.

3. "For according to the number of thy

cities are thy gods, O Judah."—Jer. 2:28.

4. "Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains; truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel."—Jer. 3:23. (a) How appropriate for us as a nation in this day of faith in ships and guns and men!

5. "They are wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge."—Jer. 4:22.

(a) What a description of the people of God!

6. "Run ye to and fro thro the streets of Jerusalem and see now and know, and seek in the broad places thereof if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it."—Jer. 5:1. (a) Compare with the story of Diogenes and his lantern in Athens.

7. "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof."—Jer. 5:30, 31. (a) How does this apply to you, preachers and members of the church who don't pay even so honorable a debt as your church paper's subscription?

8. "Behold the word of the Lord is unto them (the Israelites, and now-a-days the Christians often) a reproach; they have no delight in it."—Jer. 6:10.

9. "For the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even to the priest every one dealeth falsely."—Jer. 6:13. (a) What a condition for a nation or a church! (b) God will visit with awful judgment any man, church or nation of whom that is true.

10. "Yes, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but my people know not the judgment of the Lord."—Jer. 8:7.

11. "For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, Peace, when there is no peace."—Jer. 8:11. (a) Notice that this was quoted by Patrick Henry in his great speech before the Virginia convention. (b) And yet some empty-headed fools believe that if a man wants to be great in any line he must let the Bible and religion alone.

12. "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved."—Jer. 8:20.

13. "O that my head were waters and mine eyes a fountain of tears that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people."—Jer. 9:1.

14. "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord."—Jer. 9:23, 24. (a) This shows plainly that if you would please God you must *do right* with men and God before you *worship* Him. Jer. 7:3-7; 21-23.